Notice of Allowability	Application No. 10/633,575	Applicant(s) WEST, TRENT	
	Examiner William L. Miller	Art Unit 3677	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to *amendment received 11-28-2005*.

2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are *13,39-41 and 44-63*.

3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
   a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
      1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
      2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____ .
      3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

   * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.

5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
   (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
      1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
   (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

   Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).

6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date *11152005;02012006* .
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. The amendments filed on 10-19-20005 and 11-28-2005 have been entered.

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Jeffrey Wolfson on 02-01-2006.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the specification:

Page 1, line 5 (per applicant's line numbering), change "pending" to --U.S. Patent No. 6,993,842--.

In the claims:

The following listing of claims, including all amendments made herein, is intended to replace all prior listings of claims:

1-12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A finger ring comprising: an annular body made of a sintered hard material comprising a predominantly tungsten carbide material, wherein the annular body has at least two external surfaces that are continuous and of a width sufficient to provide each external surface with a facet ~~with each facet~~ having a polished grey mirror finish and with the hard material being long wearing and virtually indestructible during normal use of the finger ring ~~jewelry article~~ so that each facet retains its mirror finish, wherein each facet extends concentrically and continuously around the circumference of the ring without variations in its width, and wherein the body includes a cavity of a predetermined size and shape that is a

continuous slot which extends entirely around the annular body and is configured to receive an insert of a decoration component that provides a substantially different visual effect to the ring ~~article~~, with the slot positioned between and adjacent to the facets, and the ~~a~~ decoration component comprising a precious metal that is disposed in and fills the slot, which slot extends into the hard material, and the decoration component is mechanically fit with the hard material to hold the precious metal therein and wherein ~~the~~ an outer surface of the precious metal forms a smooth transition with ~~the external surface of~~ each facet.

14-38. (Canceled)

39. (Currently Amended) A finger ring comprising:

an annular ring made of a sintered hard material comprising predominantly tungsten carbide, wherein the annular ring has at least one external surface that is continuous and of a width sufficient to provide an external surface facet, with the facet having a polished grey mirror finish and with the hard material being long wearing and virtually indestructible during normal use of the finger ring ~~jewelry article~~ so that the facet retains its mirror finish, wherein the facet extends concentrically and continuously around the circumference of the ring without variations in its width, and wherein the annular ring includes a cavity of a predetermined size and shape that is a continuous slot which extends entirely around the annular ring ~~body~~; and

a decoration component comprising a precious metal disposed in the slot to provide a substantially different visual effect to the ring ~~article~~, wherein the decoration component forms a second annular ring in the slot that fills a width of the slot continuously around the annular ring and that ~~cavity of the annular ring formed of the sintered hard material~~ ~~and~~ has an outer surface that is recessed from the at least one external surface facet so as to minimize contact of the outer surface with any object that contacts the finger ring.

40. (Previously Presented) The finger ring of claim 39, further comprising a metal material disposed in the slot between a portion of the annular ring and the decoration component to facilitate retention of the decoration component therein.

41. (Previously Presented) The finger ring of claim 39, further comprising a hardening-resin component disposed in the slot between a portion of the annular ring and the decoration component to facilitate retention of the decoration component therein.

42-43. (Canceled)

44. (Previously Presented) The finger ring of claim 39, wherein the external surface of the annular ring comprises at least two external surface facets with at least one external surface facet on each opposing side of the slot.

45. (Previously Presented) The finger ring of claim 44, wherein the second annular ring has a width that is no greater than that of the slot and its outer surface forms a smooth transition with each of the external surface facets on the opposing sides of the slot.

46. (New) The finger ring of claim 13, wherein the hard material comprises at least 85 weight% tungsten carbide.

47. (New) The finger ring of claim 39, wherein the hard material comprises at least 85 weight% tungsten carbide.

48. (New) The finger ring of claim 13, wherein each external surface facet is highly polished to a mirror luster that is maintained for the life of the ring and does not require re-polishing during use.

49. (New) The finger ring of claim 39, wherein the at least one external surface facet is highly polished to a mirror luster that is maintained for the life of the ring and does not require re-polishing during use.

50. (New) The finger ring of claim 13, wherein the annular body includes design details that are maintained in their original configuration indefinitely.

51. (New) The finger ring of claim 39, wherein the annular ring includes design details that are maintained in their original configuration indefinitely.

52. (New) The finger ring of claim 13, wherein the hard material consists essentially of sintered tungsten carbide.

53. (New) The finger ring of claim 39, wherein the hard material consists essentially of sintered tungsten carbide.

54. (New) The finger ring of claim 13, wherein the hard material has a density of at least 13.3 g/cm^3.

55. (New) The finger ring of claim 39, wherein the hard material has a density of at least 13.3 g/cm^3.

56. (New) The finger ring of claim 13, wherein the at least one external surface facet is curved.

57. (New) The finger ring of claim 39, wherein the at least one external surface facet is curved.

58. (New) The finger ring of claim 46, wherein a binding material is present in an amount of 3 weight% to 13 weight%.

59. (New) The finger ring of claim 47, wherein a binding material is present in an amount of 3 weight% to 13 weight%.

60. (New) The finger ring of claim 13, wherein the at least one external surface facet is cylindrical.

61. (New) The finger ring of claim 39, wherein the at least one external surface facet is cylindrical.

62. (New) The finger ring of claim 13, wherein a portion of the external surface facet is rounded across a cross-section of the annular ring that is transverse to the concentric continuous portion.

63. (New) The finger ring of claim 39, wherein a portion of the external surface facet is rounded across a cross-section of the annular ring that is transverse to the concentric continuous portion.

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: Regarding claim 13, Grossman (US#1431652) in view of Lederrey (US#3242664) discloses all of the limitations except for the precious metal disposed in the slot filling the slot, and the decoration component being mechanically fit with the hard material to hold the precious metal therein wherein the outer surface of the precious metal forms a smooth transition with each facet. Moreover, Grossman disclose the precious metal 2 disposed in slot 3 does not fill the slot as shown Fig. 6, and Grossman discloses bending of the edge facets 4 to hold the precious metal 2 in the slot 3 thereby preventing a smooth transition between the outer surface of the precious metal and each facet. It would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to further modify Grossman (as modified by Lederrey) such that the precious metal disposed in the slot filled the slot, or such that decoration component was mechanically fit with the hard material to hold the precious metal therein wherein the outer surface of the precious metal formed a smooth transition with each facet.

4. Regarding claim 13, Bager (US#2050253) in view of Lederrey (US#3242664) discloses all of the limitations except for the decoration component being mechanically fit with the hard material to hold the precious metal therein wherein the outer surface of the precious metal forms a smooth transition with each facet. Moreover, Bager discloses bending of the edge facets 8 to hold the precious metal 9 in the slot 7 thereby preventing a smooth transition between the outer surface of the precious metal and each facet. It would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to further modify Bager (as modified by Lederrey) such that decoration component was mechanically fit with the hard material to hold the precious metal therein wherein the outer surface of the precious metal formed a smooth transition with each facet.

5. Regarding claim 39, Grossman (US#1431652) in view of Lederrey (US#3242664) discloses all of the limitations except for the second annular ring filling a width of the slot continuously around the annular ring and having an outer surface that is recessed from the at least one external surface facet so as to minimize contact of the outer surface with any object that contacts the finger ring. Moreover, Grossman discloses the second annular ring 2 does not fill a width of the slot 3 continuously around the annular ring 1 as shown in Fig. 6, and Grossman fails to disclose any recess in the outer surface of the second annular ring. It would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to further modify Grossman (as modified by Lederrey) such that the second annular ring filled a width of the slot continuously around the annular ring and had an outer surface that was recessed from the at least one external surface facet so as to minimize contact of the outer surface with any object that contacted the finger ring.

6. Regarding claim 39, Bager (US#2050253) in view of Lederrey (US#3242664) discloses all of the limitations except for the second annular ring having an outer surface that is recessed

from the at least one external surface facet so as to minimize contact of the outer surface with any object that contacts the finger ring. Although the second annular ring 9 appears to have a recess in its outer surface as shown in Figs. 8-9, the recessed surface is not recessed from the at least one external surface facet 8. It would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to further modify Bager (as modified by Lederrey) such that the second annular ring had an outer surface that was recessed from the at least one external surface facet so as to minimize contact of the outer surface with any object that contacted the finger ring.

7. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. WO 96/17319 discloses a finger ring, such as a wedding ring (Fig. 11), made of tungsten carbide material (page 9, line 6, "Hartmetall"). See related Rein (US#6020826) for reference purposes (col. 7, lines 29-40).

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William L. Miller whose telephone number is (571) 272-7068. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday-Thursday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, J. J. Swann can be reached on (571) 272-7075. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

William L. Miller
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3677

WLM